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ABSTRACT

This Boys' Town guide for parents focuses on proactive aggression, how to recognize it, and how to deal with it. The guide differentiates proactive and reactive aggression, describes potential causes, and presents suggestions for eliminating inappropriate behavior. One parent-child scenario is described in which unwitting parents with the best of intentions teach the child proactive aggression. Eight suggestions are presented to deal with this and similar situations: (1) focus on positive behaviors, de-emphasize the negative; (2) use effective praise, including giving a rationale, describing the appropriate behavior, and giving a positive consequence; (3) use planned ignoring, being prepared for outbursts; (4) use time-out; (5) use active teaching, not just talking; (6) use corrective teaching by stopping the problem behavior, giving a consequence, providing an other-centered rationale, describing the desired behavior, and practicing the desired behavior; (7) focus on self-respect rather than self-esteem; and (8) use effective communication methods. (KB)

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